

Belchamp St Paul and Belchamp Otten Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2 September 2025 commencing at 7.30pm in The Community House, Gages Road, Belchamp St Paul.

Present: Councillors David McKee (Chairman), Ruth Carter, Holly Chaplin, Dominic Curran, David Middleditch, Tony Money, and Hannah Rumsey. In attendance: John Douglass (Clerk).

3110 Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest. Apologies were received from Councillors Sarah Mardon and Peter Schwier (Essex County Council).

Declarations of interest in item 3116 (A proposal that the Parish Council, etc) were received from Cllrs McKee, Curran, and Money on the ground they were Community House trustees.

3111 PUBLIC DISCUSSION TIME (5 minutes). One member of the public was present. No issues were raised.

3112 Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2025. *A resolution to approve the minutes was proposed by Cllr Middleditch, seconded by Cllr Rumsey, and passed unanimously.*

3113 Matters arising from the July PC meeting (not covered separately on the Agenda). No matters were raised.

3114 Essex County Council matters. Emails from Cllr Schwier had been circulated to councillors on 27/8/25.

3115 Braintree District Council matters. No matters were raised.

3116 A proposal that the Parish Council endorses the Community House Trustees (in principle and, if practical, with a donation) in their application to the Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Fund for funding to refurbish the insulation of the House. A wide-ranging discussion between all the councillors took place. The matter of a donation was not debated. The resolution was put to the meeting; Cllrs McKee, Curran, and Money excused themselves from voting on the ground they are Community House Trustees. *The resolution was proposed by Cllr Rumsey, seconded by Cllr Carter, and passed unanimously.*

3117 Finance – Approval of receipts and payments. The report will be published as a separate document and put onto the website. It was noted that the VAT Return for the year ended 31/3/25 has not yet been filed with HM Revenue & Customs. *A resolution to approve the report was proposed by Cllr Middleditch, seconded by Cllr Carter, and passed with one abstention.*

3118 Vacant BSP Councillor seats. It was noted there are 3 vacancies for Belchamp St Paul councillors. There are website and notice board announcements, and Parish Magazine adverts calling for new councillors. The Clerk was instructed to ascertain the residency rules for potential councillors.

3119 Local Development Code Working Group – update. There were no developments to note.

3120 Speedwatch & traffic – parking on Cole Green. Cllr Curran reported that 2 Speedwatch sessions had been held since the last Parish Council meeting on 1/7/25. 11 cases of speeding in excess of 36 mph had been identified and reported to Essex Police.

Parking on Cole Green was a continuing problem. Cllr McKee will talk to a local craftsman with a view to making 2 new No Parking signs, and repairing a sign that has been damaged.

3121 Defibrillators. Monthly checks have been undertaken on the two defibs. The Clerk reported that ownership of the Otten machine has been transferred from Webnos (Community Heartbeat Trust) to The Circuit (National Defibrillator Network). This should not affect the availability and operation of the machine. The Clerk was instructed to notify Sporting Hedingham Football Club that the Parish Council has no objection to it having a portable defib available at the BSP playing field.

3122 Belchamp Otten village sign. Councillor Rumsey presented a line drawing of the suggested sign to the meeting. She has requested a quotation from a potential supplier.

3123 Repair of Hickford Hill notice board. The Clerk reported that a quotation had been received from Make Me Something Special of £2,334 inclusive of VAT, excluding installation. Two other potential suppliers had been approached, but no quotations were received. He reported that £400 remained available from Cllr Parker's (Braintree D C) Community Grant scheme. The Clerk was instructed to continue seeking alternative quotations for the work.

3124 Flooding. *Borley Road Bevingdon* – Essex C C officers visited the site on 18/8/25 and suspect a blocked culvert under the road. The Clerk was instructed to follow up the matter with Essex C C. *Blocked drain opposite Plough Cottage, Gages Rd, BSP* - Cllr Curran will obtain photos and W3W location at the next incident. *The Street, Otten, near tel box* – the Clerk was instructed to follow up with Essex C C. *Drain by Z bend Bevingdon* – Cllr Rumsey reported a new incident of flooding here. The Clerk was instructed to follow up with Essex C C. *General note on Flooding: Few actual incidents have been reported due to an extremely dry summer but this is likely to change in autumn and winter.*

3125 Correspondence. General correspondence had been circulated to councillors on 27/8/25.

3126 Planning – New Applications / Decisions.

Bevingdon Cottage, Borley Rd, Otten. 25/01419/HH. 2 Extensions & replacement of door by window. *Granted 22/8/25.*

Dollery, Bakers Rd, BSP. 25/01543/HH. Remove existing garage, erection of detached 2 storey garage with annexe. *Determination 5/9/25.*

Browns Barn, Church St, BSP. 25/00482/VAR. Wheelchair accessible bedroom. *Permitted 9/7/25.*

Fowes Lane BO. 25/00177/COUPA Change of use to 1 house. *Approved 15/7/25.*

12 Hickford Hill, BSP. 25/01237/HH Side & rear extensions and parking area. *Granted 19/8/25.*

Shearing Place, BSP. 25/01950/FUL. Retention of storage containers, change of use agricultural land to B8 storage. *Determination 24/10/25.*

Cherry Tree P H, Knowl Green. 25/01565/FUL. Change of use to 1 dwelling house. *Determination 18/9/25.* It was noted that there had been 3 neighbour objections on the ground of public house being turned into a dwelling. A resolution was tabled to object to the development on the ground of loss of village amenities. *The resolution was proposed by Cllr Carter, seconded by Cllr Money, and passed by a majority of three to one with three abstentions.* The Clerk was instructed to bring the resolution to the attention of Braintree D C.

3127 PUBLIC DISCUSSION TIME (5 minutes). No issues were raised.

3128 Any urgent matters and proposals for future agenda items. The following matters were tabled: 1) Governance of the Playing Field Management Committee; 2) Roadside potholes from Church Rd to Hickford Hill BSP - the Clerk was instructed to bring this to the attention of Essex C C.

3129 The next Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 14 October 2025 at 7:30pm in The Community House, Gages Road, Belchamp St Paul.

The meeting closed at8:50 pm.

Signed
(Chairman)

14 October 2025